A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE

COURT HOUSE, RICHIBUCTO, ON TUESDAY,

JANUARY 13, 1829:

BEFORE THE

MAGISTRATES, JURIES, AND OTHER INHABITANTS,

AT THE OPENING OF THE GENERAL SESSIONS;

BEING THE TERM AT WHICH

LICENCES ARE GRANTED ANNUALLY,

TO THE

RETAILERS OF SPIRITUOUS LIQUORS.

BY

JOHN MACLEAN, A. M.

MINISTER OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION OF RICHIBUCTO.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THOSE WHO HEARD IT DELIVERED.

STUBS & SON, PRINTERS,
SAINT ANDREWS,
1829.

RICHIBUCTO, 20TH FEBRUARY, 1829.

THE following Discourse was composed in a hurried manner, for a particular occasion, without the slightest idea that it would ever be published. It is now given to the public, at the request of a number of those who heard it delivered; without any further alterations, of consequence, than the omission of a few sentences, of a merely local application. If by the blessing of GOD, it is made to subserve in the least, elsewhere, the important purposes for which it was delivered here, the object which the Author had in view, in consenting to have it printed, will be satisfactorily realized.

WHATEVER Profits may arise from the Sale, will be devoted to religious purposes.

SERMON.

1 Cor. VI. 9 & 10.—*Be not deceived:*——*Drunkards shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* Hab. XI. 15.—*Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!*

IT is only after a very considerable struggle between personal feelings and a sense of duty, that I have met you here to-day. That of a Minister of Christ, is an office of great and solemn responsibility, and an office which imposes duties often very unpleasant, and even painful, upon those who would discharge its functions with fidelity. We sustain the character of Ambassadors for Christ, to communicate the Message of Heaven to our fellow-men; a character awfully important to us and them, involving the interests of both, to an extent, which, the last day only, will fully disclose. As such, we are enjoined by divine authority, not only to proclaim salvation freely to all who apply for it through a crucified Redeemer; but also, to reprove with firmness, obstinate transgressors; and solemnly to warn those who neglect the Gospel, who contemn its ordinances, and refuse to obey it in their general conduct, that they are assuredly on the road to death, and that unless they repent, and "break off their sins by righteousness," they must inevitably perish. The great commission, which God gave to the Prophet Ezekiel, he still gives in substance to all the Watchmen upon the walls of the New Testament Church. *Ezekiel* XXXIII. 7. 8 & 9.—"So thou, O Son of Man, I have set thee "a Watchman unto the House of Israel; therefore thou shalt "hear the word of my mouth, and warn them from me. When "I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; "if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that "wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I re"quire at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the wicked of "his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he "shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul."

ACTING under a commission like this, I cannot stand by in silence, and see Intemperance entering like a flood among us, and sweeping away religion, morality, and every thing good, in its progress; and defeating, to a great extent, every scheme devised for the improvement and salvation of the present and succeeding generations, and satisfy myself that I am acting faithfully as a Minister of Religion. Nor can I see immortal beings on all sides of me, losing fast, all relish and all regard, for every thing laudable, under the stupifying and demoralizing influence of strong drink; many drowning all sense of present duty, and all thoughts of future responsibility, in the cup of intoxication, and many descending utterly besotted into the lowest Hell; (for if there is truth in the Word of God, this is the inevitable allotment of every man who dies a drunkard,) and others readily and deliberately, countenancing and helping them forward in their progress to temporal and eternal ruin, and say in truth, that my hands are free from the blood of these men, while I open not my lips to warn them from their danger, nor make any attempt to stop the current of intemperance, so awfully baneful to us in its progress.

A SENSE of duty to God, to this community, and to myself, therefore, urges me to come forward in this public manner, solemnly to protest against the present indiscriminate system of licencing and tolerating taverns and dram-shops, as a system which is doing much to demoralize this neighborhood, and to frustrate every attempt that is made to advance its civil and religious interests; as a system also, which is furnishing individuals with the power of poisoning and ruining their fellow men, for the sake of gain, and which is drowning many in perdition: and not only to protest against it, but publicly to call upon all who are not dead to every feeling of duty or responsibility, to come promptly forward and unite vigorously with our Magistrates and Peace Officers for its suppression, and for the suppression with it, as far as possible, of the evils of which it has been productive.

I KNOW that those who are already the votaries of dissipation will be disposed to treat with indifference, if not with contempt and mockery, every thing that may be said on this subject; and that those again who love their worldly interests better than their duty, and are making gain of the temporal and eternal ruin of those around them, will affect to take offence at the statements which may be made, as the most graceful way

of evading the force of the awfully solemn passages which we have now read from the Word of God. But whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto such rather than unto him, or to study to please such rather than to please God, judge for yourselves. To me the path of duty is obvious and I am determined to follow it. It is not with the expectation of reforming a single drunkard, that I now attempt to draw forth the sin of Intemperance before you, in its true features and awful tendency. I know that I might with nearly the same prospect of making any impression or of effecting any good, take my stand in the grave-yard, and address myself to the inhabitants of the tomb, as to persons addicted to this vice. It is with the hopes of doing something to dimmish the allurements and temptations to this sin, and thus to prevent others from entering upon that road to ruin, that I appear before you on this occasion.

The two passages of Scripture which have now been read in your presence, bring before us two distinct subjects for our consideration, and solemn and important they both are. In the first of these passages, God pronounces an awful sentence, nothing less than a sentence of exclusion from the Kingdom of Heaven, against every drunkard.—In the last, he denounces a curse against all those who, designedly, furnish them with drink to become so. Permit me now to offer a few remarks on each of these particulars, in the order here adopted.

I. Consider seriously the solemn and unequivocal declaration of God, by his inspired Apostle, in the first clause of the Text: "Be not deceived....drunkards shall not inherit the "Kingdom of God." In the V. Chap. 21st verse of the Epistle to the Galatians, the same declaration is repeated. The Apostle there enumerates a variety of sins, one of which is drunkenness, and then says—"I tell you before, as I have "told you in time past, that they who do such things, shall not "inherit the Kingdom of God." Let me here ask then, do you sincerely believe these declarations? Do you believe that all the drunkards in the community are on the road to Hell, and that none of them can ever possibly enter the Kingdom of Heaven, unless they repent and reform? If you do, (and you cannot pretend to disbelieve it, without charging God with falsehood,) will any have the hardened effrontery to condemn or ridicule any efforts made to apprize these unhappy beings of their guilt and danger, or to prevent others from following them on the road to death? We are not to consider this denuncia-

tion as absolute, more than others expressed in a similar way. Assuredly no person, who enters eternity in the character of a drunkard, will inherit the Kingdom of God; but there is no reason to conclude, that he who once sustained this character, but has become a penitent and reformed, may not obtain mercy. The instances of reformation however, among persons of this description, are so very rare, that the case of such is proverbially hopeless. This is a sin which Heaven seems to have stamped with almost utter reprobation. Not one of a thousand who once become addicted to it, ever again takes hold of the path of life. No sooner has a person entered upon a course of intemperance, than he seems chained down in iron bondage, incapable of making an effort to escape. The voice of conscience, that inward arbiter of right and wrong in man, ceases to be regarded, and ceases to reprove. The voice of relatives and friends, the awful denunciations of the law of God, the winning invitations of the Gospel of his Son, are alike unheeded. Property, respectability, usefulness, reason, health, comfort, and even life and salvation, successively, or together, vanish under the withering influence of this demon vice; and the unhappy victim gradually descends, from perhaps affluent worldly circumstances, to poverty and wretchedness; from a station of respectability among men, to a place among the dregs of society; from the dignity of a rational being, to a level with the swine wallowing in the mire; and ultimately, from the land of the living, into a premature grave; and from the place of hope, and the reach of mercy, into the regions of eternal night. This is no overcharged picture. You have only to look around you in Society, to see but too many held thus, as by a spell, and deliberately sacrificing health, prosperity, character, usefulness, the comfort of their families, nay more, the peace and salvation of their own immortal souls, to gratify an appetite for ardent spirits.

There is probably no vice, to which men in civilized society are addicted, which invariably carries so many, and such enormous evils in its train, as intemperance. Truly its name may be called *Legion*. Just in proportion as a man gives himself up to follow strong drink, he becomes useless to himself, to the Church of God, and to Society—indisposed and unfit to perform the duties of a present life, and negligent and regardless about preparation for the future. Can the drunkard be a dutiful husband and parent? It is impossible. The time, the abilities, and the property which ought to be devoted to the

maintenance and comfort of his family, are wasted in rioting and drunkenness. He who is bound by every tie of nature and religion, to be their friend, guardian and support, becomes their worst enemy. Can he train up his family religiously? No—his life is an outrage upon all religion. Can he be an useful member of the Church of Christ? No—it would be an utter profanation of things sacred, to allow such a man the privileges of membership among the followers of Jesus. Can he be an exemplary member of civil society? No—his example is first contagious, and then ruinous to all who follow it. Can he be living in preparation or readiness for the eternal world? No—the law, with a terrible voice, thunders in his ears that dreadful sentence, "Drunkards shall not inherit the Kingdom of God;" and to complete his misery, he is cut off from prayer, the last resort of the guilty and perishing. No person, who intends only to hold on in sin, can ever pray with sincerity for deliverance: nor while he intends nothing but to hold on in sin, can a petition for pardon ever be heard. No person who places himself continually in the way of temptation, and continually rushes wilfully into vice, as the drunkard does, can ever pray with sincerity "lead me not into temptation; but deliver me from evil;" and he who cannot pray, cannot be saved. The drunkard holds out therefore, to his family and to the world, the deplorable spectacle of a sinner hastening to perdition, with his eyes closed to the danger of the precipice on which he stands, and the terrors of the gulf, which opens beneath, neither offering a prayer for mercy, nor making an effort to escape.

If intemperance be a vice thus odious, inveterate, and ruinous in its tendency; if none while addicted to it, can possibly enter the Kingdom of Heaven, surely many among us and around us, have reason to look forward to death and eternity with fearful anticipations. But so it is, that among all the unnumbered and hapless beings, who in this and every other civilized country, become the victims of intemperance, few, very few indeed, will admit that they are in the estimation of God, drunkards, or exposed to the ruin to which this vice leads! Few indeed, even of those unhappy beings who have brought themselves to poverty, to contempt, and to wretchedness by intemperate drinking; and are now with swollen eyes, bloated countenances, and trembling hands, reeling on the brink of the grave, will allow, that they are the persons to whom our text adverts, or that they are in a state of exclusion from the Kingdom of Heaven! Such is the stupifying, the besotting influence of

this vice, upon the perceptions and feelings of all who become addicted to it. It is for this reason, that God by his inspired servant, begins this solemn admonition, with this caution, "Be not deceived;"—just because men are prone to form a wrong estimate of their own character in reference to this subject. Not one of a thousand of those who are really guilty of this sin, and exposed to the awful penalty here denounced against it, will believe that they are implicated, or in any danger. But is the declaration of God the less true, or will it be less certainly realized, because such persons say to themselves, "peace, peace," while sinning in the face of it? We should ever recollect, that it is not according to our own estimate, but according to the estimate which God forms of our character, that we must stand or fall.

Now God has plainly and unequivocally intimated in the text, who, by him, are accounted guilty of the sin of drunkenness, viz: every person who commits it, whether seldom or often. So common has this vice become in this and other communities, and with so much indulgence and courtesey have men learned to treat it, that to be disguised with strong drink once, twice, or half a dozen times in a year, is scarcely accounted in any degree criminal, or in any respect inconsistent with a Christian character, or with membership in the Church of Christ. With such indulgence have men learned to treat it, that persons must be intoxicated monthly, nay weekly, nay almost daily, before it will be admitted that they are excluding themselves from salvation by drunkenness. But has God any where intimated, that of occasional transgressions in this way, he takes no notice; that it is only when men swell up their acts of disobedience in this way, to some certain great amount, that he holds them guilty of the sin here denounced? Far different is the case. He has here placed the drunkard, the thief, the murderer, the adulterer, and many others in the same catalogue, and warned us in the most solemn manner, that none of all these shall find a place in Heaven. Now let me ask, who do you think is accounted a murderer in the estimation of God, the man who has wilfully and unjustly taken the life of one of his neighbors, or only the man who has murdered twenty or a hundred? You will readily answer, doubtless the person who has wilfully and unjustly taken the life of but one man, is guilty of murder in the sight of God; and you will readily admit that unless he repent, and seek forgiveness with a resolution to do so no more, he cannot be saved. If I next enquire, who is a thief,

the man who has stolen his neighbors goods once, or only the person who steals constantly as often as he has an opportunity —you will readily grant, that he who has stolen once, is a thief in the estimation of the Most High, and that there is pardon for him through the blood of Christ, only when he seeks it with penitence, and a determination to steal no more. You will readily make the same admission respecting adultery. But strange it is, if the enquiry be now made, who is guilty before God of the sin of drunkenness—the man who has once committed it, or only the man who becomes intoxicated every month, or every week, or as often as he has opportunity? Many will be ready to say, without hesitation, surely no person can be held guilty of drunkenness, in the sight of God, who transgresses in this way only once or twice in the course of a season: it can only be the man to whom intemperance has become habitual, who weekly or daily, violates the rules of sobriety, who is chargeable with drunkenness, in the estimation of God; and few even of this description, will admit that the character in the text belongs to them.

Not without good reason, and infinite wisdom, does the Most High caution us here, not to deceive ourselves. Be assured, my friends, that the man who has made himself drunk, with ardent spirits, though it be the first time, is as truly guilty of drunkenness before God, as the man who has stolen or murdered the first time, is guilty of stealing or murder; and as truly as the latter is excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven till he repents, and obtains forgiveness, through the blood of the Redeemer, so is the former. Recollect, also, that it is in no case the man who merely confesses his sins, but the man who "confesses and forsakes them," to whom mercy is promised.— We pretend not to limit the goodness of God, or to say how often a man may fall into this or any other sin and again be pardoned, if his repentance be genuine—the mercy of God is infinite. But it is absolutely certain that a man can never have pardon in any case or for any sin, whatever his prayers or confessions be, who has still no other intention, but to commit the same crime over again, whenever an opportunity occurs. He, therefore, who has once committed the sin here forbidden, and repented of it, and solemnly resolved to guard against it in future, and is again left to transgress in the same way, has reason to be doubly penitent, doubly humbled before God, and doubly watchful in future; and only when he is so, does he act as a Christian, or has he cause to expect forgiveness. But the

man who repeats his offences in this way, without penitence or remorse, or an aim at abstinence in future, though it be only after long intervals, though it be but once or twice in a year, or in a number of years, is as truly excluding himself from the kingdom of Heaven, by drunkenness, as the man who steals, or murders, or commits adultery, yearly, or once in a number of years, without repentance, or an effort to amend. None of all such, saith God, shall enter in there.

GUARD against committing this sin; even *occasionally*, therefore, as one which is in every instance heinously offensive to the purity of the Most High, and threatened with an awful retribution. But guard against even the most *infrequent commission* of it also, as a vice of a most insinuating and growing tendency. Many who have never been seen to stagger, with strong drink, during their whole lives, may, from the relish they have acquired for it, and for the company of the intemperate, truly be denominated DRUNKARDS BEGUN. He who commits this sin once, is more ready to commit it a second time; and he who has repeated it a second time, feels less compunction about being guilty a third time. Thus, by degrees, the appetite for ardent spirits strengthens, the warnings of conscience are stifled, the fear of God is extinguished; with slow but steady progress the habit becomes inwrought into the constitution, the man becomes callous to shame or remorse, reels in the streets, loses the use of his limbs, his tongue, his reason—in one word, he is ruined: health, estate, character, body, and soul, ruined forever. God sums up the dreadful consequences of his departure from a life of sobriety, apparently a small matter in its commencement, in this one, this solemn denunciation,—a denunciation which should awaken alarm in the bosom of every man who in any case oversteps the laws of sobriety, or is in the way of being tempted to do so;—"Drunkards shall not inherit the Kingdom of God."

II. WHEN God had thus in a manner so explicit and alarming, expressed his displeasure against drunkards, allow me next to turn your attention to the second clause of the text, to the curse which he has denounced against those who designedly furnish them with drink to become so. "Woe unto him that "giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, that "he may be drunken also." Here is a passage in the book of God, which it becomes us to ponder no less carefully than the former. There are few, very few days in the year, in which

there are not men intoxicated with drink, in this community. Let us pause here, and enquire who are chargeable, in the sight of God, with giving them drink, with putting their bottle to them, and making them drunken.

1st.—The Retailers of ardent spirits in this community, are certainly heinously guilty of this sin. Houses of entertainment are necessary as an accommodation to society, but houses of riot and intemperance, are not; they are on the contrary, pests, and nuisances, which every good man should exert himself to suppress. Allowing the popular opinion to be correct, viz — "That ardent spirits tend to support the human constitution un- "der fatigue, and the extremes of heat and cold, and that they "are, when used in moderation conducive to health, and of "course to long life;" (all of which I disbelieve utterly, because all this is positively denied by the most skilful and experienced medical men both in Europe and America;) there is a vast difference between the person who supplies travellers and others, with what is consistent with sobriety, and the man who stands in his bar-room, or at his counter, and measures out to every hapless being, who can remunerate him for it, as long as he is able to stand and swallow it. And is not this the case with nearly every Licenced Retailer in this neighborhood? Where is the tavern or dram shop in which the most dissipated wretch that walks the streets, will be refused as much liquor as will make him drunken, if he has only money to pay for it? I know that those who are in the habit of supplying the intemperate with strong drink, in this way, as long as they can only compensate them for it, endeavor to quiet their consciences with some such reasoning as this:—"Those unhappy beings "will have drink from some quarter, and will give their money "for it, as long as they have any to give; we, therefore, may "as well take their money, and give them drink, as allow oth- "ers to take it." Pause, and consider seriously, you who reason and act in this manner; is this an apology for giving drink to your neighbor, to make him drunken, which will stand the scrutiny of the last day, when all your ill-gotten gain must be accounted for before the Judge of all the Earth? If a proportion of the inhabitants of this settlement were determined to destroy their lives, by swallowing poison, and you had a goodly stock of it on hand, and were aware that if you did not supply them with it, they would obtain it elsewhere; would you consider yourselves justified in taking their money, and weighing

out to them the fatal drug, merely because you might as well have their money as allow others to have it,—while the houses around you were filling with the dying and the dead, the victims of your avarice? Certainly not. Doubtless, you would say, we cannot take money on condition of furnishing our neighbors with the means of self-destruction; whatever others do in the matter, our hands shall be free from the blood of these men. But here are men destroying themselves utterly, both body and soul, and are your hands free from their blood, while you are readily and deliberately, every day, supplying them with the means of accomplishing it?

Let me here ask you, do you believe that all the wretched beings who are reeling, and quarrelling, and swearing and blaspheming among you, in your drinking rooms, at your counters, are on the way to Heaven? You cannot. If you believe in the existence of a God and a future state of rewards and punishments, you must believe that their feet go down to death, and their steps take hold on hell. Let me ask you in the second place, are you then prepared to meet all these hapless and ruined beings at the judgment seat of Christ, [for there you must meet them,] and say, when you have cheerfully helped them down to everlasting perdition, for the sake of gain, that you are innocent of their blood? Can you read the curse here denounced, from generation to generation, in the book of God,—"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken," and then satisfy yourself that this curse is not denounced against you? Now is the time to ponder these things. There is yet room for repentance, and amendment, and forgiveness. The woe here denounced, is frequently begun to be experienced in the present world; and there is but too much ground to fear, that numbers here are already experiencing the commencement of it, though they know or regard it not. You will ask how? It is a part of the word of God verified in every day's experience, that "evil communications corrupt good manners or morals;" in other words, that they who associate habitually with the irreligious and depraved, are ever in danger of becoming irreligious and profane themselves. In this manner, God in his righteous providence frequently allows those who pollute, and poison, and ruin others, for the sake of gain, to be themselves polluted, and poisoned, and ruined, by the dissolute and profane company which their own avarice collects around them; and to have their children frequently, or other relatives, contaminated or ruined also. And

is not this a curse indeed? Will not the woe here denounced be awfully realized, if you, by mingling with such company as you are drawing around you, become yourselves regardless of religion and the concerns of eternity, despisers of the Gospel of Christ, and so familiarized with vice, as neither to hate nor to shun it; and find yourselves, at death, excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven, with the same companions with whom you so willingly associated here on earth? And will not the woe here threatened, be still further realized in your unhappy experience, should you also, (which is but too probable,) see your own children at a future period, or perhaps your other relatives, drinking deep of the same cup which you have measured out to others, and descending with them, besotted, into eternal misery. These are some of the ways in which a righteous God generally inflicts the curse here pending; but he can do it in a thousand other ways; and, be assured, the judgments of Heaven will not always sleep. There is a time of retribution coming. Jehovah has said it, and it must come to pass. Woe must overtake, sooner or later, him who persists, in defiance of this proclamation, "in giving drink to his neighbor, in putting his bottle to him, and making him drunken," for in so doing, he is destroying his health, his character, his property, his usefulness, his temporal life, and what is of more value than all these, his immortal soul, for drunkards cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.

If we judge men by their fruits, or their conduct, which is the criterion given by Christ, there is certainly much ground to fear, that the Retailers of ardent spirits here, are themselves experiencing a reaction of that moral pestilence which they are spreading around them. Is religion prospering among them? We have certainly no evidence of it; but much of a contrary kind. Many are becoming themselves the victims of intemperance; and who among all this class of persons, show any thing like anxiety about the advancement of religion around them, in the community? Who comes forward with any degree of zeal or liberality, to devise and execute measures for furthering the Gospel of Christ—for training up the young in the fear of God, or for the advancement of any thing that involves the best interests of mankind? Surely it is none of these. Nor is this to be expected. The man who makes his house or shop the constant resort for the intemperate and profane, must be continually surrounded with reviling, and quarrelling, and drunkenness, and blasphemy. It would be wonderful indeed, if in

such a situation, he either became, or continued long, a zealous friend and promoter of religion, or possessed of a desire, even to witness its advancement. He is not only exposed to the most contaminating example, but also, wilfully excluding himself from the benefit of the ordinary means of personal holiness and salvation. Can the man who has been all day measuring out drink to his neighbors, to intoxicate, debase, and ruin them, go to his knees at night, and supplicate a blessing on his worldly business? Can he, in the morning, ask the guidance of God and prosperity to attend him in the avocations of another day, when it is to be spent in the same employment? No—to pray for prosperity in such a business, is to pray for the temporal and eternal ruin of others. Can he pray with sincerity and fervency for the salvation of his own soul, when he has no regard or sympathy for the souls of his neighbors? Can he go with clean hands and a pure heart to the sanctuary of God on the Sabbath, after a week spent in this manner, and pray with fervency for the progress of godliness around him, for the prosperity of the Church of Christ, or the salvation of sinners; when his whole conduct throughout the week, is utterly opposed to the interests of the Redeemer's cause, subversive of all religion, and only leading men down to perdition? It is impossible.—Prayers from a person acting in this way, can only be a solemn mockery in the sight of that Great and Pure Being who requires "truth in the inward parts."

2d.—Magistrates who grant Licences to these Taverns and Retail Shops, are, to a certain extent, guilty of *indirectly* furnishing their neighbors with drink to become intemperate. They who vend liquors to the inhabitants and others, in this indiscriminate way, vend under a license from them, which they could withold at pleasure, and the instant any house is known by them to be disorderly, they have power to suppress it. Magistrates are the official and legal guardians of the public morals. Their commissions are granted to them expressly to authorize and empower them to devise and execute measures for the public good, and to punish and suppress whatever is opposed to the civil and religious interests of society, provided it be punishable by the laws of the country; and they have yet to render an account to God, of the way in which they discharge the duties of this important office. Among all their varied duties there is probably none more difficult to perform aright, and at the same time so important—none of greater responsibility than that of issuing Licenses to persons to retail ardent spirits.

I AM aware that there is a general persuasion that the present system is radically bad, that it is demoralizing and ruining many in this community; and that a reformation is intended by the Justices of the Peace in their present Session. This is so far good; it is what every good man—every man who really values the prosperity of this infant settlement, must rejoice to hear. Surely a change is much required. Let facts speak for themselves. For two miles and upwards, from the spot where we are now met, and that the most populous spot on the River, one house out of every three, or thereabouts, retails spirits. If this is not a proof that intemperance prevails to an alarming extent among us, I know not what will be taken as proof. Surely none will pay for licences who do not find drinkers. Here is another fact deserving our consideration, and bearing upon the same point. It is computed that the Merchants of this Port, measure out from their stores not less than 10,000 gallons of ardent spirits, annually, and the purchasers pay in return, between £3000 and £4000 currency, yearly. Between £3000 and £4000 annually, for the means of intemperance! We are complaining of the want of roads, of public buildings, of schools, and similar important objects. Here is a sum, which, if devoted to such purposes, only for a few years, would raise us to vie with the most favored spots in the Province. Must not a community always remain poor which consumes so large a portion of its earnings in this manner; and have we not reason to anticipate shortly, a load of poor-taxes, which will be difficult to bear, when many of those who are pursuing a course of intemperance, with their families, are taken from that part of the population who pay poor rates, and are added to the number of those who are supported by them.

IF the settlement be not prospering in worldly matters, under this system, how do religion and morality thrive under it? Take this part of it, where the system is carried to its greatest height—where nearly every third house is a resort for the intemperate and profane: how is the Sabbath spent as often as it returns? I pretend not to say, but certainly it is spent by the population generally, in this section of the parish, in any way but in the service of religion, and preparation for eternity. When all are invited on that sacred day, to leave the world and assemble in the House of God, to praise him for all his goodness and supplicate his mercy, and to hear the Gospel preached, which is the power and wisdom of God, to the salvation of sinners,—how many are found to attend? Few indeed. Here is an

interesting group of forty or fifty children, formed to exist forever in happiness or misery, growing up amidst abounding wickedness, many of them with none to care for their souls; and where is the individual sufficiently interested in their immortal welfare, to assemble and instruct them a few hours on Sabbath, though a house and suitable books are ready provided, and though the children around them, in other quarters of the Parish, enjoy, every Sabbath, such instruction. Intemperance, and swearing, and Sabbath breaking, they have always before them; but who is found to teach them the fear of God, the only effectual preservative against these vices? These facts speak volumes upon the influence of the present system on religion and morals. This is certainly a state of things which calls loudly for a change. Indeed, while it is continued, it is almost useless to make any attempt to advance religion or morality in this quarter of the Parish. It is said by an inspired writer, that one sinner destroys much good, but truly, so many persons thus publicly, and by profession, contaminating the community, would destroy more good than we could all produce. And why are they tolerated? Why are shop-keepers who daily and unblushingly, violate the law respecting retail licences, not treated as the law directs? Why is there not notice taken of those who openly convert their shops into drinking rooms and haunts of dissipation, when the law so expressly provides that no spirits are to be drunk in them? Are these shops, thus kept, an accommodation to travellers? Are they an accommodation to the sober part of the inhabitants? Are they of any other use but as a lounging place for the idle and dissipated? Are they not a degree worse than even the taverns, for two reasons—in the first place, because they afford a larger quantity of liquor for a smaller price, and are, therefore, a temptation to those who haunt them, to drink more; and in the next place, because when night arrives, they who have spent the day in them, and drunk away their money and their senses, are turned out, destitute, upon the streets, without a shelter from the weather, and perhaps without ability or means to procure one. Why, in the next place, is there half the number of tavern licences granted? Some will perhaps reply, that numbers are able to support themselves in this way, who would otherwise be on the Parish. Better, and cheaper far, would it be for the Parish to support every Retailer in it, than to permit the third part of the houses now selling spirits, to continue to do so.

Were an appropriate sign to be devised, for these taverns and dram-shops, generally, as at present regulated, it would be this "BEGGARS MADE HERE," and underneath should be inscribed, "THIS IS THE WAY TO HELL, GOING DOWN TO THE CHAMBERS OF DEATH:" for how few who once become the habitual inmates of these haunts of dissipation, ever again return to the path of life!

3D.—THE inhabitants, generally, of this Parish, are not guiltless of *supporting* the present system, and of thus *indirectly* furnishing their neighbors with the means of intemperance in this way; that they could do much to suppress it by giving information against those who keep irregular houses, or sell without license, and they do it not. It is impossible that Magistrates can see one of a hundred instances in which the laws are violated in this way. It is certainly the imperative duty of every good man, of every man who desires the prosperity of this growing settlement, to inform against those who transgress the laws and injure others in this manner, as readily as he would, inform against a person he saw stealing his neighbors goods.—The latter is not a worse member of Society, nor is he violating the laws of God and his country, more than is the former. Besides, the sober part of society here, or those who call themselves so, are blameable for appearing in such places, among the intemperate. It gives them countenance. It encourages the inconsiderate to believe that there can be nothing immoral and nothing dangerous in frequenting these haunts, when those who are looked up to as men of sobriety and respectability are found in them.

IN prospect of that solemn hour, when we must all stand before a higher tribunal than any on earth, to account for our faithfulness or unfaithfulness, in the various situations which we now respectively occupy, I here conclude, by protesting, as a Minister of Religion, against this indiscriminate mode of issuing Licences, and against these houses, as they are now conducted,—and I solemnly call upon you all, Magistrates, Parents, Christians, Church Members, and all good men, to unite, and sweep these nurseries of idleness, dissipation, and ruin, from the face of this community. As you love your neighbour, as you love your children, as you love the prosperity of your adopted country, as you love the Church of Christ, as you love the Saviour who died to Redeem you, as you love your own souls

—spare them not. Let the practice of drinking in stores and shops, be utterly suppressed. Let there be fewer Tavern Licences granted, a very few is sufficient for all the purposes of accommodation. Let those licences be given only to those who will remember the Sabbath, to sanctify it, and to close their doors on that day, against all but travellers. Let them be given to none but those who will make their houses places of entertainment only, and not of rioting and drunkenness. Let the Magistrates make it their business, occasionally, to step into the taverns which they establish, and observe how they are conducted. Let every conscientious man promptly inform upon all who, in defiance of such regulations, attempt to retail without a licence, or, having licences, refuse to keep orderly houses,—let all offenders be indiscriminately and promptly treated as the law directs, and the moral aspect of society here, will, very soon, undergo a salutary change.

They who complain of, or oppose such measures, must be either persons who are themselves intemperate, and wish not to be deprived of their usual places of resort, or they must be persons who are now deriving gain from the intemperance of others; and certainly no attention should be paid to the voice of either the one or the other of these classes of persons, upon the subject. We cannot make men religious, but we can prevent them from systematically poisoning and ruining others, for the sake of gain. We cannot make drunkards sober men, but we can shut up the nurseries of dissipation, and thus prevent others from entering and becoming so. We cannot constrain men to sanctify the Sabbath, but we can prevent them from disturbing others, when endeavoring to keep it holy. We cannot save men who care not for their own souls from going down to perdition, but we can block up some of the widest avenues which lead down thither, and thus prevent our neighbors—our friends—perhaps our own children, from entering and descending with them. In addition to all this, we can do our own duty, and save our own souls, whether others be profited by our exertions or not, and whatever others do in the matter.

My friends and neighbors!—I have done. Should the sin of following strong drink, with all its baneful attendants, increase among us, I stand acquitted before God and you, of having made an honest effort to arrest its progress. It has been the thing farthest from my wish or intention, to offend a single individual. I view you all as immortal beings, acting now the

part which must ere long determine your everlasting allotment, and God knows my heart's desire and prayer for you all, is, that you may be saved. If, therefore, any thing wrong has been spoken, I entreat you to forgive it—but if any thing true and important, I charge you in the presence of God, to remember and profit by it, as you must answer for it at the judgment seat of Christ.